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The Road to Freedom Which Is Also
The Road to Truth and the Way to Victory

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The Road to Freedom, which is also
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By Chang Kuo-t'ao.

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The suffering Chinese people, especially the more intelligent, must for the sake of their country seek the truth. This is fundamental, especially in political matters. Everything, even abuse and trickery, is in some degree bound thereby. Some fear criticism in our own ranks: but only thus can confusion be avoided.

The road to freedom is a highway through history, and is also the road to truth and the way to victory. It is the path of progress, strewn with criticisms and correction of errors. Reform is not mutual hate, but love - There are only two alternatives: progress and freedom, or self-destruction through deceit.

I

First let us ask dispassionately why the Communists were victorious on the mainland. Here we must reason coolly. The Communists are both reactionary and revolutionary. As to the latter, from Marx to Mao they have been skilled at detecting social ills, exposing them, and using them to arouse hatred, increase fighting strength, and attain the objective of seizing political power. Corruption in the existing regime made matters worse, as was also the case in Russia.

Herein lie some lessons.

1. It was not that the Communist Party overcame freedom and democracy; but an insidious violence destroyed a decadent dynasty.
2. Social ills should be earnestly corrected; any regime that professes to care for the people's welfare should do this, otherwise they just open the way for Communists.

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3. The rotten dynasty did not understand, so they could not do thus; they did not quench the fire but only added fuel to the flames.

4. To counter Red efficiency, they should have striven for progress towards freedom and democracy.

5. China's anti-Communist forces must no longer grieve over spilt milk, but hasten to reform.

6. Now that Communism has developed into Soviet imperialism, all the more must it be met with the overall objective of freedom and progress. Relying solely on nationalistic appeal without content of freedom and progress is bound to fail.

If we heed these lessons, we will not again be self-deceived by a mass of minor matters.

II

One Feature in the Communist appeal is that they are adepts at trifling with the connotation of freedom and democracy.

This we neglect at our peril.

If we penetrate the smoke-screen to see their real character, we may say it is a blend of these forces: the temptation to hate human ills, the tradition of an authoritarian bureaucratic rule handed down from a former age of freedom, and the theory of world revolution centering around a "dictatorship of the proletariat." This is true of the Chinese Communists and also of the Russian. After the Reds, in Russian and in China, obtained mainland power this appeal lost its power. They used dictatorship of the proletariat as a cloak, in reality they continued authoritarian bureaucratic rule.

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Without doubt the character of Chinese Communists is a subservient arbitrary bureaucratic rule.

The development of the free world also shows several features:

1. Free growth of culture and thought.
2. Mass-production, high quality at cheap price, slight profits with big sales, and competition among stock corporations.
3. The main current being a democracy that puts the people first.
4. International peace and co-operation in its initial stages, on a foundation formed of the free nations.

To sum up, this is a noble highway towards freely developing improvement and progress. While the development is slow, it is nevertheless genuine and wholesome. It gradually eliminates unhealthy conditions in society, without evil after-effects.

The Communist party rejects the way of improvement and progress, hoping for an enforced revolution through violent social change. Thus it runs counter to the historical growth of mankind, in fact takes just the opposite road. It makes the Communist creed sacrosanct, abolishing all freedom of culture and thought. Its authoritarian bureaucratic rule controls the entire economy, enslaving all the people. It wishes to make totalitarian Communist dictatorship take the place of democratic government. It desires to destroy the free nations, in order to conquer the world by war, and bring about what they call the world revolution. This is altogether going in reverse; here is where they are reactionary -- This is using men's hatred of social ills, to further their own reactionary desires.

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The Communist party's basic error lies just here. It is equally true of the Chinese Communists. Their "leaning to one side" is not just a transitory policy; it is a very important element in their essential structure. "Leaning to one side" sacrifices the people, sacrifices the nation, makes China a Soviet satellite, and also a Soviet war-implement. Therefore the Chinese Communist dictatorship is in essence a subservient bureaucratic cruel dictatorship. This subservience causes feverish preparations for war on a par with [those of] the Soviet Union; while control of economy and break-down of culture must be vigorously pushed. This increases the severity of their arbitrary rule. Thus a hundred conflicts arise as they go down the road of all the other despots and earn the people's curses.

Communist despotism, like all others in the world's history, will be smashed by the free people of the nation and of the world. But not at one leap. The forces of freedom must reform and unite in a great current of democracy, before the present Red power can be broken.

Effective struggle against the Communists demands two conditions:

1. The masses must awake to new democratic strength, forming an anti-Communist-tide -- This new strength not a motley of dis-appointed politicians, nor an outward coalition, still less a line of middle-roaders: but are original force that will unite and reform all anti-Communist strength.

2. Existing anti-Communist forces must seek renovation, in the hope of uniting on a democratic foundation.

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III

The road by which the Chinese people will reach freedom must be a new democratic road; the monarchical restoration road, the authoritarian road does not lead through.

There has been plenty of time for the old anti-Communist plans to be tried out. Not only have they proved ineffective, but have even furthered its growth: not only have they failed to unite anti-Communist forces, but have even proved a stumbling-block. As long as these old ways are not changed, what's the sense in talking about effective opposition? about real unity? about sure victory?

The new democratic forces must rely on new ways, new appeals, to unite the nation to meet the crisis; also, to incite the old by criticism and discussion to reform and advance. This the way to combat Communism successfully, and also the road by which the Chinese people may attain freedom.

Some say that the rise of a new force to anti-Communist in name, but anti-Chiang in reality; a dividing, and not a uniting, of anti-Communist forces. Really, this reasoning is specious. A rise of genuinely new anti-Communist forces not only gives new hope to the oppressed, but provides for effective union such as cannot be attained under the rule of despotism. With the rise of such forces, the anti-Communist struggle comes to mean a sacred national struggle for survival and liberty. Criticism is seen to be a means of progress, and becomes a means of furthering reform. Union and efficiency start from this point.

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Can the old ruling powers take the same anti-Communist viewpoint as the new democratic forces, and work for true unity? That depends on whether the former can strive for an effective changeover from the old character and practices. Anyone knows that suppressing the new forces will not heal old weaknesses nor hasten anti-Communist unity. In a word, authoritarianism is not the way to success, but to defeat, in fighting Communism. Remember the lessons of defeat: let us never take that road again.

IV

Where shall reform of the old ruling powers begin?

1. In politics: The old ideas of "being parents to the people," "taking office to get rich," etc., must go at once. All despotic rule, oppressive policies and practices, simply help the Communists, directly or indirectly. Hereafter, political movements and the new ideas of work must be in service to the people, uncorrupted, and productive of results; serving not ruling the people.

2. In economics: Past using of special privileges and employing public trust for personal gain, must be corrected. All economic policies must be framed with a view to the public good. Standards of living must be raised, industry and trade developed. All these are ways of fighting Communism.

3. In military matters: Private ownership of troops, and factionalism must be corrected. Withholding of pay and ill-treatment of soldiers must be prevented in the interest of the whole people as opposed to factional advantage.

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4. In party matters: All selfish grasping must be reformed, and former unethical practices brought to an end. Act on the principles of freedom and democracy and win the people's confidence.

We must take to heart these lessons of the past or fail in the fight against Communism.

V

The free world is far ahead of the Soviet bloc, both potentially and actually, in matters cultural, economic and military. Looked at in the course of history, in the resistance of the free world against the Soviet bloc, truth and justice are on the side of the former. However, the free world has certain internal weaknesses:

1. Certain areas of the free world are for various causes, backward, and hence offer a fertile field for Communist intrigue. Democratic nations have been negligent, and even when purposing to remedy conditions, have failed through lack of initiative and positive action.

2. Democratic nations have not fully agreed on policy and program, thus allowing the Reds more opportunity to divide the free world.

3. Portions of the free world that have not suffered from the Communist plague do not truly understand the meaning of the anti-Communist struggle and hence are more susceptible to Red propaganda.

These internal weaknesses and antitheses must be remedied, as the most important task immediately before us.

The matter may be illustrated from recent Chinese history. Urgency of national unification and defense militated against internal cleansing, so the Kuomintang victory turned to ashes at last.

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Let the free world learn a lesson from China. In the civil war following Japan's surrender, the Kuomintang was far ahead of the Reds in military strength and popular supports. But because of internal corruption which was not corrected, popular favor was lost, and victory went to the other side.

If the free world wants to gain final victory in the fight against Communism, it must inaugurate efficient internal reform. The basic principle is: Democratize the undemocratic; make the bound free; turn injustice into justice. This is, for China and for the world, the road to freedom and peace; it is effective way to resist Communism; it is the path to truth and victory.

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- 8 -